

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1306

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-SOVIET MILITARY EXCHANGES

REF: (A) STATE 016537, (B)MOSCOW 15332

1. WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE ISSUE OF U.S.-SOVIET MILITARY EXCHANGES.

2. "WAR COLLEGE" VISITS: WE AGREE THAT THESE VISITS
SHOULD PROCEED AND THAT WE SHOULD APPROACH THE SOVIETS,
AS WE DID LAST YEAR, AND PROPOSE A U.S. VISIT TO THE
USSR TO BE FOLLOWED BY A SOVIET VISIT TO THE U.S. WE
WOULD AGAIN WISH TO PROPOSE THAT THE U.S. DELEGATION
INCLUDE AT LEAST ONE CIVILIAN STUDENT AND FACULTY
MEMBERS. TO REINFORCE THIS REQUEST FOR A CIVILIAN
MEMBER OF THE U.S. GROUP, WE PROPOSE TO RAISE THE
ISSUE WITH THE MFA AT THE SAME TIME WE APPROACH
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THE UVS SECTION OF THE MOD. WE ARE NOT SANGUINE
THAT THE SOVIETS WILL RESPOND ANY MORE POSITIVELY
TO A CIVILIAN THAN THEY DID LAST YEAR, BUT WE BELIEVE THE EFFORT
SHOULD BE MADE. THE APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
(E.G., EARLY FEBRUARY) AND WE WOULD HOPE TO BE ABLE TO SUGGEST
APPROXIMATE DATES FOR THE U.S. VISIT WHEN WE FIRST PROPOSE THE
EXCHANGE WITH THE SOVIETS. WE ASSUME WE WOULD AGAIN FIND A MAY

VISIT MOST CONVENIENT.

3. MILITARY LECTURERS: WE WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND THAT WE SIMULTANEOUSLY PROPOSE TO THE SOVIETS A REPEAT OF THE EXCHANGE OF MILITARY LECTURERS. WE ASSUME THAT SOME SERVICE ROTATION ON THE U.S. SIDE MAY BE DESIRABLE, AND THEREFORE LEAVE TO THE CONCERNED WASHINGTON AGENCIES TO PROPOSE THE APPROPRIATE SERVICE. IN KEEPING WITH LAST YEAR'S EXCHANGE THE LECTURER SHOULD BE A FLAG RANK OFFICER. IN ORDER TO MOVE THE FOCUS OF THE LECTURES AWAY FROM WWII THE SUBJECT WE BELIEVE, SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO COVER A MORE RECENT PERIOD, POSSIBLY MIXING THE HISTORICAL WITH THE DOCTRINAL. IN THIS MANNER WE HOPE TO WEAN THE SOVIETS AWAY FROM STRICTLY HISTORICAL TOPICS. IF POSSIBLE THE SUBJECT MATTER (IN VERY GENERAL TERMS) AND THE RANK AND BRANCH OF SERVICE OF THE LECTURER SHOULD BE PASSED TO THE SOVIETS ALONG WITH THE SUGGESTED DATES (APPROXIMATE) FOR THE U.S. LECTURER'S VISIT WHEN WE FIRST APPROACH THE MOD HER IN MOSCOW.

4. PORT VISITS: WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE TO MAKE A PROPOSAL TO THE SOVIETS AT THIS TIME FOR AN EXCHANGE OF PORT VISITS BY U.S. AND SOVIET NAVAL SHIPS. ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL STATE OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS HAS IMPROVED OVER THE LAST YEAR, IN PARTICULAR FOLLOWING THE SEPTEMBER MEETINGS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND GROMYKO IN WASHINGTON, THERE IS AT PRESENT A MAJOR SOVIET MILITARY OPERATION UNDERWAY IN ETHIOPIA OF WHICH WE DO NOT APPROVE AND SUBSTANTIAL DISAGREEMENT OVER THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS WARRANTS POSTPONING FOR NOW AN
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APPROACH TO THE SOVIETS FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE. ADDITIONALLY, AS WE REPORTED IN 1R6901125377 OF 29 DEC 77 THE SOVIET NAVY APPARENTLY IS MOST INTERESTED IN AN EXCHANGE OF SHIP VISITS, BUT NOT IN 1978. WE ARE PREPARED TO REVIEW THE ISSUE ONCE AGAIN AT A FUTURE DATE, WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES MAY BE JUDGED MORE FAVORABLE FOR SUCH VISITS.

5. CINCUSARERU-CINCGSFG VISITS: WE BELIEVE THAT THE PERIODIC REPETITION OF THESE VISITS IS DESIRABLE, BUT SINCE IT IS NOW APPARENTLY THE SOVIET'S TURN TO ISSUE AN INVITATION, WE RECOMMEND THAT WE AWAIT SUCH AN INVITATION AND MEASURE IT AGAINST THE STATE OF RELATIONS CURRENT AT THAT TIME.

6. WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT THE RATHER HIGH VISIBILITY EXCHANGES BE KEPT IN RESERVE BUT THAT THEY BE REVIEWED LATER IN THE YEAR SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE. AT THE SAME TIME WE THINK WE CAN AVOID GIVING TOO NEGATIVE AN IMPRESSION OF OUR OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATE OF RELATIONS BY CONTINUING WITH THE LOWER-LEVEL EXCHANGES OF THE "WAR COLLEGES" AND THE MILITARY LECTURERS. THUS WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO "REGULARIZE" SOME OF THE EXCHANGES WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT TO SOME EXTENT THIS PROGRAM MUST BE DEPENDENT ON THE EBB AND FLOW OF OUR BILATERAL

RELATIONS.
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